

# Supplementary Materials for Gauging Preference Stability under Authoritarianism

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## A1 Survey Questions

TABLE A1. SURVEY QUESTIONS AND INTERTEMPORAL STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY

No	Question	Sign	Sample 1		Sample 2		
			Mean	NA (%)	Mean	NA (%)	Stability
<i>Political Liberalism (Politically Liberal)</i>							
1	From a long-term perspective, western multi-party systems are not suitable for China's situation. 长远来看，多党竞争的政治制度不适合中国国情。	-1	3.53	6.47	3.46	8.98	0.60
2	China should not adopt universal suffrage at this stage because people's level of education is not high enough. 现阶段中国不宜开展普选，因为人民没有足够高的教育水平。	-1	2.90	4.87	2.78	5.39	0.57
3	Local people's congress deliberations on government work and inquiries of heads of government departments should be broadcast live on TV. 地方人大审议政府工作、问询政府部门负责人，应该通过电视实况转播。	1	4.04	2.64	4.02	1.91	0.48
4	When accidents that have major repercussions for public safety occur, the government should freely disseminate information even if information disclosure may increase the risks of widespread panic. 发生重大社会安全事故时，政府应尽可能公开信息，即使信息公开有可能造成大众恐慌。	1	3.69	2.64	3.56	3.03	0.54
2	5 The media must adhere to the principle of positive publicity in its orientation to reporting instead of constantly revealing the dark side of society. 媒体必须坚持以正面宣传为主的报道方针，而非一味地揭露社会阴暗面。	-1	3.40	2.50	3.34	2.69	0.44
	6 In order to bring criminals to justice, it is necessary to use some methods of investigation and interrogation that violate legal procedures. 为了将犯罪分子绳之以法，使用一些违反法律程序的侦察、审讯手段是必要的。	-1	3.00	2.99	2.98	3.70	0.50
	7 The death penalty should be abolished for those who commit economic crimes, administrative crimes, and other non-violent crimes. 处罚经济犯罪、职务犯罪等非暴力刑事犯罪人员，应该停止使用死刑。	1	2.61	5.35	2.65	4.38	0.47
	8 The government should not prosecute people who criticize the government on social media platforms, as long as they do not intentionally spread false rumors. 对于在社交媒体上评论政府的人，即使其言论与事实有出入，只要不是蓄意抹黑，政府不应追究其责任。	1	3.09	3.48	2.91	3.70	0.47
	9 There should be limitation on people gathering in public places and participating in demonstrations. 应当限制人们在公共场所聚集和参与游行示威。	-1	3.07	4.31	3.08	4.04	0.44
	10 Religious people should be allowed to preach publicly in non-religious sites. 应该容许宗教人士在非宗教场所公开传教。	1	2.53	4.24	2.33	3.25	0.61
	11 Books and articles that denigrate China in the name of academic research should not be allowed to be published or posted online in China. 对于以学术为名贬低中国的书刊和论文，不应允许其在中国刊登、出版或上线。	-1	3.70	3.41	3.83	4.71	0.41
	12 Primary school, secondary school, and college students should all participate in government-organized military training. 无论中小学生或大学生，都应参加由国家统一安排的军训。	-1	3.89	1.74	3.98	1.57	0.56
	13 The government should allow people to express their positive or negative views toward government policies. 应当允许人们在互联网上对国家政策发表正面或负面的评价。	1	3.64	3.06	3.66	1.57	0.54
							0.38

TABLE A1. SURVEY QUESTIONS AND INTERTEMPORAL STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY (CONT.)

No	Question	Sign	Sample 1		Sample 2			
			Mean	NA (%)	Mean	NA (%)	Stability	
14	The government has no right to interfere in whether people have children, or how many children they have. 政府无权干涉个人要不要孩子，要几个孩子。	1	3.43	3.27	3.46	3.25	0.62	0.34
<b><i>Market Economy (Pro-Market)</i></b>								
1	Sectors related to national security and important to the national economy and people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises. 那些关系到国家安全和国计民生的重要领域，必须全部由国有企业掌控。	-1	3.64	3.69	3.46	3.25	0.47	0.40
2	The government should not interfere if private companies become monopolies in the course of market competition. 对于民营企业在市场竞争中自然形成的垄断地位，政府不应规制。	1	2.58	4.66	2.42	4.26	0.35	0.26
3	If the price of agricultural by-products is too high, the government should intervene. 农副产品价格短期内快速上涨，政府应该出面干预。	-1	3.96	2.64	3.92	2.36	0.44	0.16
4	The government should restrict private education. 应当限制民办、私立学校。	-1	2.77	2.57	2.70	1.57	0.53	0.28
5	Private capital should be encouraged to set up private hospitals to provide convenient and high-quality services to those who are willing to pay higher prices. 应当鼓励民间资本设立私立医院，为愿意支付高价的人提供便捷和高质量的服务。	1	3.48	2.50	3.28	2.81	0.54	0.33
6	The government should not use fiscal resources to subsidize companies with large numbers of employees that are on the verge of bankruptcy. 政府不应使用财政资源补贴那些濒临倒闭、但雇佣众多员工的企业。	1	3.14	5.42	2.88	5.61	0.38	0.16
7	Individuals should be allowed to own, buy and sell land. 应该允许私人拥有和买卖土地。	1	2.97	4.38	2.82	3.82	0.62	0.37
8	When market prices are low, the government should pay above-market prices to buy crops from farmers. 在市场粮价较低时，政府应以高于市场价的价格向农民收购粮食。	-1	3.81	3.82	3.72	3.93	0.53	0.14
9	The government should allow people to freely exchange foreign currency. 应当允许人们自由兑换外国货币。	1	3.52	2.99	3.31	4.15	0.58	0.42
10	The government should support SOEs with various means to make them bigger and stronger so that they are advantaged in international competition. 政府应该通过各种手段扶持国企做大做强，使其在国际竞争中占据上峰。	-1	3.69	3.96	3.52	3.37	0.53	0.29
11	The national defense industry should be open to private capital. 国防军工行业应该向民营资本开放。	1	3.17	6.33	2.94	7.30	0.60	0.38
12	A high tariff should be imposed on imported goods that are also produced domestically to protect domestic industries. 应当对国外同类产品征收高额关税来保护国内企业。	-1	3.40	4.17	3.31	4.49	0.51	0.32
13	When bidding for government procurement projects, foreign enterprises should receive the same treatment as domestic private enterprises. 对于政府采购项目，外资企业应享受和国有企业相同的待遇。	1	3.34	4.66	3.19	4.94	0.49	0.36
14	The investments Chinese companies make overseas should not solely be profit-driven but also guided by government strategies. 中国企业的海外投资不应单纯以赢利为目的，而要以国家战略为导向。	-1	3.91	4.24	3.95	3.70	0.45	0.33

TABLE A1. SURVEY QUESTIONS AND INTERTEMPORAL STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY (CONT.)

No	Question	Sign	Sample 1		Sample 2			Predictability
			Mean	NA (%)	Mean	NA (%)	Stability	
<i>Nationalism (Nationalistic)</i>								
1	The government should safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity as much as possible through diplomatic and economic means to avoid military conflicts. 政府捍卫国家主权和领土完整，应尽可能采取外交和经济手段，避免军事冲突。	-1	4.03	1.39	4.08	1.23	0.44	0.14
2	Reunifying Taiwan using military might can be considered when military capabilities are fully developed. 在军事条件成熟的情况下，可以考虑武力统一台湾。	1	3.62	2.29	3.33	4.15	0.64	0.48
3	The government should prohibit performers who support Taiwan independence or HK independence from performing in China. 政府应当禁止支持台独、港独的艺人在大陆地区进行演艺活动。	1	4.04	2.36	4.03	2.36	0.41	0.32
4	It is acceptable to criticize or ridicule the country's founding leaders or national heroes in literary and artistic works. 开国领袖、民族英雄可以作为文艺作品批评或调侃的对象。	-1	2.02	1.67	1.79	2.69	0.56	0.38
5	A national holiday should be established to commemorate the birthday of Chairman Mao. 应该设立法定假日纪念毛主席诞辰。	1	3.81	2.36	3.73	1.80	0.68	0.43
6	Chinese citizens should be allowed to simultaneously hold foreign citizenship. 应当允许中国公民同时拥有外国国籍。	-1	2.69	3.96	2.44	2.81	0.61	0.33
7	The state should take measures to train and support athletes so they can win glory for the country in various international competitions. 中国应该坚持“举国体制”，以国家力量培养和支持体育健儿在国际赛场上为国争光。	1	3.78	2.02	3.84	2.24	0.69	0.24
8	Foreign journalists who frequently publish negative news reports about China should be allowed to enter China. 应当允许那些经常发表关于中国的负面报道的外国记者进入中国。	-1	2.63	2.78	2.40	3.37	0.43	0.33
9	Criminal punishment should not be imposed on those who do not respect the national flag or national anthem in public spaces. 对于在公共场所出现的不尊重国旗、国歌的行为，不应对当事人处以刑事处罚。	-1	2.12	2.02	2.09	1.91	0.33	0.30
10	China should accept supervision and criticism from international organizations and improve its standing in areas such as human rights, democracy and freedom of the press. 中国应当接受国际组织的监督和批评，改善在人权、民主、新闻自由等领域的现状。	-1	3.65	2.71	3.63	4.38	0.45	0.27
11	As long as it is in the nation's interest, China can unilaterally impose economic or trade sanctions on other countries. 只要符合国家利益，中国可以单方面对其他国家进行经济或贸易制裁。	1	3.23	3.55	2.91	3.93	0.62	0.32
12	The government should attach as much importance to the development of military power as it does to economic development. 政府应像重视发展经济那样，重视发展军事实力。	1	4.17	1.67	4.09	2.24	0.53	0.45
13	When facing potential military conflicts, China should avoid using preemptive military tactics. 在可能出现的军事冲突面前，中国不应使用先发制人的军事策略。	-1	2.56	3.82	2.56	4.71	0.52	0.32

TABLE A1. SURVEY QUESTIONS AND INTERTEMPORAL STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY (CONT.)

No	Question	Sign	Sample 1		Sample 2		
			Mean	NA (%)	Mean	NA (%)	Stability
14	The core of China's foreign policy is to break through the containment and siege of western countries led by the United States. 中国外交战略的核心，是突破以美国为首的西方国家对中国的遏制和围堵。	1	3.99	4.24	3.88	6.85	0.45
<b><i>Traditionalism (Traditionalist)</i></b>							
1	Students should not be required to read works such as <i>The Three Character Primer</i> and <i>The Disciples</i> , because they do not meet the needs of the times. 不要求小学生诵读《三字经》、《弟子规》等作品，因为它们不符合时代的需要。	-1	2.23	3.34	2.05	2.13	0.60
2	State healthcare resources should be oriented more toward Traditional Chinese Medicine than toward western medicine. 国家医疗资源应该更多向中医、而非西医倾斜。	1	3.41	4.03	3.26	3.03	0.61
3	During the stage of compulsory education, class hours spent on English should be reduced, and class hours dedicated to traditional culture should be increased. 应在义务教育阶段减少英语课时，增加关于传统文化的内容。	1	3.51	1.60	3.37	2.02	0.51
4	Sex education is not suitable for primary school. 小学阶段不宜开展性教育。	1	2.52	3.69	2.37	3.93	0.63
5	Same-sex marriage should be legalized in China. 应该立法承认同性婚姻。	-1	2.95	6.88	3.07	5.16	0.71
6	Adult films and television production should be legalized. 成人影视作品应该合法化。	-1	3.28	3.20	3.19	2.69	0.64
7	China should support and develop GMO technology in agriculture. 政府应该支持和发展农业转基因技术。	-1	2.97	5.63	2.92	5.84	0.68
<b><i>Social and Economic Equality (Pro-Equality)</i></b>							
1	Public hospitals can set up fast-track, special outpatient service, and advanced wards to provide additional services to those who are willing to pay a high price. 公立医院可以设立快速通道、特别门诊、特需病房，为愿意支付高价的人提供增值服务。	-1	3.08	2.50	2.84	2.47	0.59
2	The government should set quotas to guarantee that a significant proportion of jobs at all levels of government are held by women. 政府应设定额度，保障女性在各级政府工作人员中有较高的比例。	1	3.70	2.43	3.61	2.58	0.47
3	It is justified that public servants enjoy better social welfare benefits than employees of private firms and institutions. 公务员比企事业单位人员享受更好的福利待遇，是合理的。	-1	2.51	3.27	2.50	3.14	0.57
4	Children of urban migrant workers attending primary and secondary schools should enjoy the same treatment as school-age children of local residents. 进城务工人员子女在务工地就读中小学，应享受与本地适龄儿童相同的待遇。	1	4.36	1.39	4.43	0.79	0.45
5	Households and individuals that own property should be subject to property taxes. 应向拥有房产的家庭或个人定期征收房产持有税。	1	2.98	4.45	2.82	3.48	0.53

TABLE A1. SURVEY QUESTIONS AND INTERTEMPORAL STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY (CONT.)

No	Question	Sign	Sample 1		Sample 2		
			Mean	NA (%)	Mean	NA (%)	Stability
6	The primary means to improve the lives of people with low income is for the government to give them fiscal subsidies. 改善低收入者生活的首要手段是政府给予财政补贴。	1	3.43	2.85	3.22	2.24	0.52
7	The government should reduce the tax burden of high-income people. 政府应该降低高收入人群的税收负担。	-1	2.62	3.82	2.53	2.92	0.38
<i>Minority Accommodation (Minority Accommodating)</i>							
1	It is reasonable for family planning policies to be more relaxed toward ethnic minorities than toward ethnic Han. 对少数民族实施比汉族更为宽松的计划生育政策，是合理的。	1	3.27	3.96	3.22	5.05	0.55
2	Due to security concerns, it is necessary to strengthen inspections of some ethnic minorities in railway stations, airports, hotels and other public places. 出于安全需要，在车站、机场、酒店等公共场所，有必要对特定少数民族人员加强检查。	-1	3.21	3.48	3.03	2.92	0.57
3	Ethnic minorities should be appointed to the top political positions of minority autonomous regions, including the position of regional party secretary. 民族自治区应当由少数民族担任“一把手”，包括自治区党委书记。	1	3.07	6.61	2.93	6.29	0.49
4	The policy of giving additional points to ethnic minority students in the college entrance examination should be stopped. 应该停止对少数民族考生的高考加分政策。	-1	3.55	2.85	3.38	2.92	0.57
5	In ethnic minority areas, women should be prohibited from wearing clothing that obscures their faces in public places, and men prohibited from having long beards. 在少数民族地区，应立法禁止女性在公共场所佩戴蒙面罩袍，禁止男性留长须。	-1	2.67	6.68	2.45	6.06	0.47
6	In ethnic minority areas, the government should regularly appropriate funding to maintain religious sites, including mosques and Buddhist temples. 在少数民族地区，政府应拨款定期修缮清真寺、藏传佛教寺庙等宗教场所。	1	3.37	3.55	3.34	4.60	0.58
7	Primary and secondary schools in ethnic minority areas should use Chinese as the main teaching language and vigorously promote Mandarin. 在少数民族地区的中小学，应使用以汉语为主的教学方式，并大力推广普通话。	-1	4.02	1.74	3.99	2.13	0.49

*Note:* The signs are what we use to construct the additive indices. The stability and predictability measures are based on Sample 2 only.

TABLE A2. QUESTIONS USED IN THE COLLEGE SURVEY

No	Item	Sign
<i>Political Liberalism</i>		
1a	The government should not prosecute people who criticize the government on social media platforms with false information, as long as they do not intentionally spread false rumors. 对于在社交媒体上评论政府的人，即使其言论与事实有出入，只要不是蓄意抹黑，政府不应追究其责任。	1
1b	The government should prosecute people who criticize the government on social media platforms with false information. 对于在社交媒体上评论政府的人，如果其言论与事实有出入，政府应当追究其责任。	-1
2a	The media must adhere to the principle of positive publicity in its orientation to reporting instead of constantly revealing the dark side of society. 媒体必须坚持以正面宣传为主的报道方针，而非一味地揭露社会阴暗面。	-1
2b	The media's responsibility is to reveal the dark side of society; it does not have to adhere to the principle of positive publicity in its orientation to reporting. 媒体的职责是揭露社会丑陋的一面，并不一定要坚持以正面宣传为主。	1
3	When accidents that have major repercussions for public safety occur, the government should freely disseminate information even if information disclosure may increase of the risks of widespread panic. 发生重大社会安全事故时，政府应尽可能公开信息，即使信息公开有可能造成大众恐慌。	1
4	Books and articles that denigrate China in the name of academic research should not be allowed to be published or posted online in China. 对于以学术为名贬低中国的书刊和论文，不应允许其在中国刊登、出版或上线。	-1
<i>Pro-Market</i>		
1	Individuals should be allowed to own, buy and sell land. 应该允许私人拥有和买卖土地。	1
2	Sectors related to national security and important to the national economy and people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises. 那些关系到国家安全和国计民生的重要领域，必须全部由国有企业掌控。	-1
3	The government should allow people to freely exchange foreign currency. 应当允许人们自由兑换外国货币。	1
4	The national defense industry should be open to private capital. 国防军工行业应该向民营资本开放。	1
5	A high tariff should be imposed on imported goods that are also produced domestically to protect domestic industries. 应当对国外同类产品征收高额关税来保护国内企业。	-1
<i>Nationalism</i>		
1	The government should safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity at all cost. 应该不惜一切代价捍卫国家主权和领土完整。	1
2	It is acceptable to criticize or ridicule the country's founding leaders or national heroes in literary and artistic works. 开国领袖、民族英雄可以作为文艺作品批评或调侃的对象。	-1
3a	The core of China's foreign policy is to maintain good relationships with western countries led by the United States. 中国外交战略的核心，应该是与美国为首的西方国家处理好关系。	-1
3b	The core of China's foreign policy is to break through the containment and siege of western countries led by the United States. 中国外交战略的核心，是突破以美国为首的西方国家对中国的遏制和围堵。	1
4	The government should prohibit performers who support Taiwan independence or HK independence from performing in China. 政府应当禁止支持台独、港独的艺人在大陆地区进行演艺活动。	1
5	A national holiday should be established to commemorate the birthday of Chairman Mao. 应该设立法定假日纪念毛主席诞辰。	1
<i>Traditionalism</i>		
1	Same-sex marriage should be legalized in China. 应该立法承认同性婚姻。	-1
2	State healthcare resources should be oriented more toward Traditional Chinese Medicine than toward western medicine. 国家医疗资源应该更多向中医、而非西医倾斜。	1
3	Sex education is not suitable for primary school. 小学阶段不宜开展性教育。	1
4	China should support and develop GMO technology in agriculture. 政府应该支持和发展农业转基因技术。	-1
5	Adult films and television production should be legalized. 成人影视作品应该合法化。	-1

**Note:** Questions with labels 1a, 2a, 3a were used in the 1st wave while questions with labels 1b, 2b, and 3b were used in the 2nd wave.

## A2 Sample

Participants in Samples 1 and 2 were paid 10 RMB for the first wave, and 12 RMB for the second wave. Participants in Sample 3 were paid 10 RMB in Wave 1 and 15 RMB in Wave 2.

**Recruitment.** We analyze two theoretically important populations for understanding preference stability under authoritarianism: (i) urban adults in China and (ii) college students enrolled at top Chinese universities and Chinese students studying abroad.

Samples 1 and 2 were recruited via large online panels maintained by Qualtrics and Dynata, respectively. Invitations were delivered through mobile apps and affiliated communities. Respondents opted in and were randomly selected within researcher-defined quotas. Quotas targeted key marginals of the 2010 urban population (age, gender, region, and education where feasible; age restricted to under 60) to approximate urban distributions. We did not apply post-stratification weights; instead, we relied on quota designs to align sample marginals with population benchmarks.

Qualtrics and Dynata maintain large respondent pools via mobile applications and affiliated online communities. When a new survey is launched, participants receive invitations through these apps. Those who opt in are screened according to researcher-defined quotas (e.g., age, gender, region, and education). Respondents who complete the surveys earn platform points, which can be redeemed for small rewards. This recruitment model is standard in contemporary online survey research and helps ensure rapid data collection while maintaining quality control. Respondents were randomly drawn from the companies' panels, subject to our pre-specified quota requirements. The quotas were defined along age, gender, region lines to approximate urban population distributions. When quotas were unmet in certain categories or locations, the survey firms issued targeted invitations until all quotas were filled.

While these samples are not drawn with fully probabilistic designs, our primary estimand concerns within-individual stability over time rather than cross-sectional means, which reduces sensitivity to representativeness. Moreover, prior work using similar online samples shows broad concordance with household surveys in China (Li et al. 2017).

To bolster validity, we include a third longitudinal cohort (Sample 3), which we re-

cruited and managed directly through university networks in China and the United States. Specifically, we recruited Chinese students studying in the U.S. via WeChat and US-based Chinese student networks, assisted by ten research assistants from five US colleges.<sup>1</sup> The research assistants recruited first-year undergraduates at their own and other universities through personal networks. We also used snowball sampling to reach students at as many of the top 100 US universities (2019 US News rankings) as possible. In China, we recruited students from three top-tier public universities in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou,<sup>2</sup> using online forums, student groups, and in-person outreach, also following a snowball sampling approach.

**Quality check and summary statistics.** To ensure data quality for these samples, we implement two checks. First, an attention check requires respondents to select a specific response within a battery of questions. Second, a speeder check excludes respondents who complete the survey too quickly—specifically, in under eight minutes. These checks lead to the exclusion of approximately 33–35% of the original sample, and we conduct our analyses using the remaining data.

For Sample 3, we recruited Chinese students studying in the U.S. via WeChat and US-based Chinese student networks, assisted by ten research assistants (RAs) from five US colleges.<sup>3</sup> The RAs recruited first-year undergraduates at their own and other universities through personal networks. We also used snowball sampling to reach students at as many of the top 100 US universities (2019 US News rankings) as possible. In China, we recruited students from three top-tier public universities in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou,<sup>4</sup> using online forums, student groups, and in-person outreach, also following a snowball sampling approach.

Table A3 presents summary statistics by sample. Figures A1 and A2 distributions of samples by age and education, respectively.

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<sup>1</sup>These include two private institutions—one Ivy League—and three public universities across the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West of the US.

<sup>2</sup>All three are public, as are most of China’s top institutions.

<sup>3</sup>These include two private institutions—one Ivy League—and three public universities across the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West.

<sup>4</sup>All three are public, as are most of China’s top institutions.

TABLE A3. SUMMARY STATISTICS

## Panel A: Sample 1 (Urban Residents, 2018)

	Wave 1			Wave 2		
	Obs	Mean	SD	Obs	Mean	SD
Female	1,438	0.48	0.50	314	0.48	0.50
Age	1,438	34.91	11.3	314	33.64	9.47
High school	1,438	0.13	0.34	314	0.08	0.27
3-year college	1,438	0.25	0.43	314	0.26	0.44
4-year college or above	1,438	0.45	0.50	314	0.55	0.50
Years of education	1,438	14.39	2.28	314	14.94	1.95
Ethnic Han	1,438	0.96	0.19	314	0.98	0.13
Urban Hukou	1,438	0.76	0.43	314	0.80	0.40
CCP member	1,438	0.18	0.38	314	0.17	0.37
Married	1,438	0.68	0.47	314	0.71	0.45
Monthly income below 3000 RMB	1,438	0.27	0.44	314	0.16	0.37
Monthly income above 8000 RMB	1,438	0.21	0.41	314	0.33	0.47
Coastal provinces	1,438	0.51	0.50	314	0.61	0.49

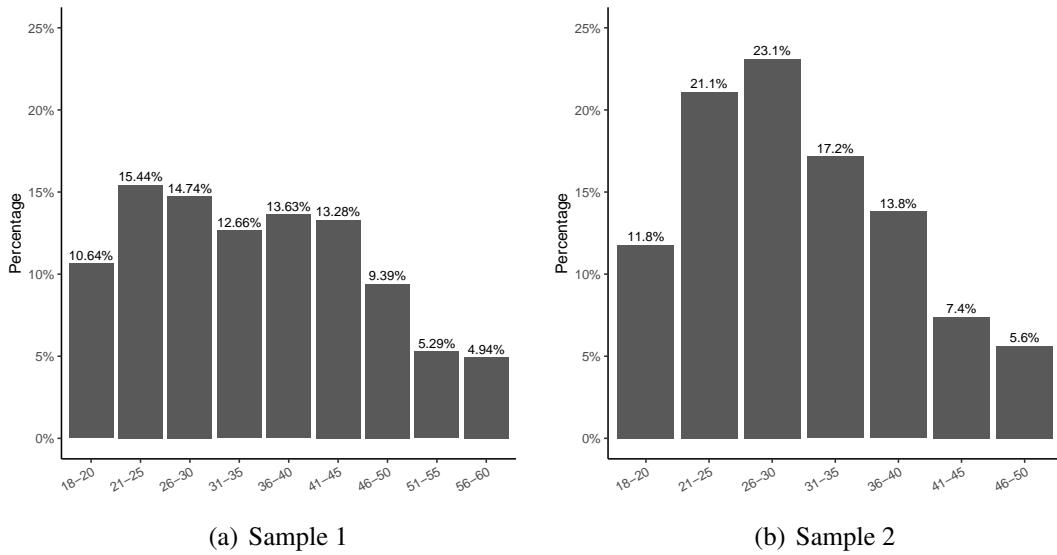
## Panel B: Sample 2 (Urban Residents, 2019)

	Wave 1			Wave 2		
	Obs	Mean	SD	Obs	Mean	SD
Female	891	0.51	0.50	482	0.53	0.50
Age	891	30.29	8.13	482	31.78	8.12
High school	891	0.14	0.34	482	0.11	0.31
3-year college	891	0.15	0.36	482	0.14	0.34
4-year college or above	891	0.54	0.50	482	0.64	0.48
Years of education	891	14.70	2.65	482	15.20	2.39
Ethnic Han	891	0.96	0.19	482	0.96	0.19
Urban Hukou	891	0.67	0.47	482	0.75	0.43
CCP member	891	0.20	0.40	482	0.22	0.41
Married	891	0.61	0.49	482	0.69	0.46
Monthly income below 3000 RMB	891	0.31	0.46	482	0.21	0.41
Monthly income above 8000 RMB	891	0.31	0.46	482	0.38	0.49
Coastal provinces	891	0.55	0.50	482	0.62	0.49

## Panel C: Sample 3 (College Students, 2019-2020)

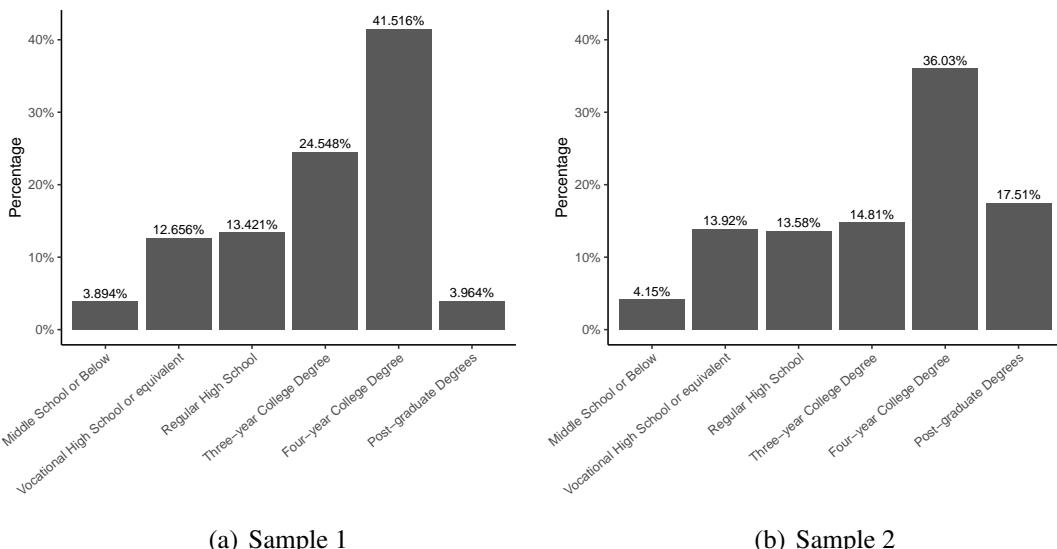
	Wave 1			Wave 3		
	Obs	Mean	SD	Obs	Mean	SD
Study in the US	988	0.38	0.49	805	0.34	0.47
Female	988	0.54	0.50	805	0.56	0.50
Age in Wave 1	988	18.35	0.74	805	18.32	0.75
Raised in a large city	988	0.73	0.45	805	0.70	0.46
Family monthly income < 8,000 RMB	988	0.27	0.44	805	0.29	0.45
8,001-20,000 RMB	988	0.33	0.47	805	0.34	0.48
20,001-50,000 RMB	988	0.16	0.37	805	0.16	0.36
>50,000 RMB	988	0.12	0.32	805	0.11	0.32

FIGURE A1. SAMPLE COMPOSITION: AGE



**Note:** The above figures show the age distributions of respondents in Sample 1 and Sample 2.

FIGURE A2. SAMPLE COMPOSITION: EDUCATION

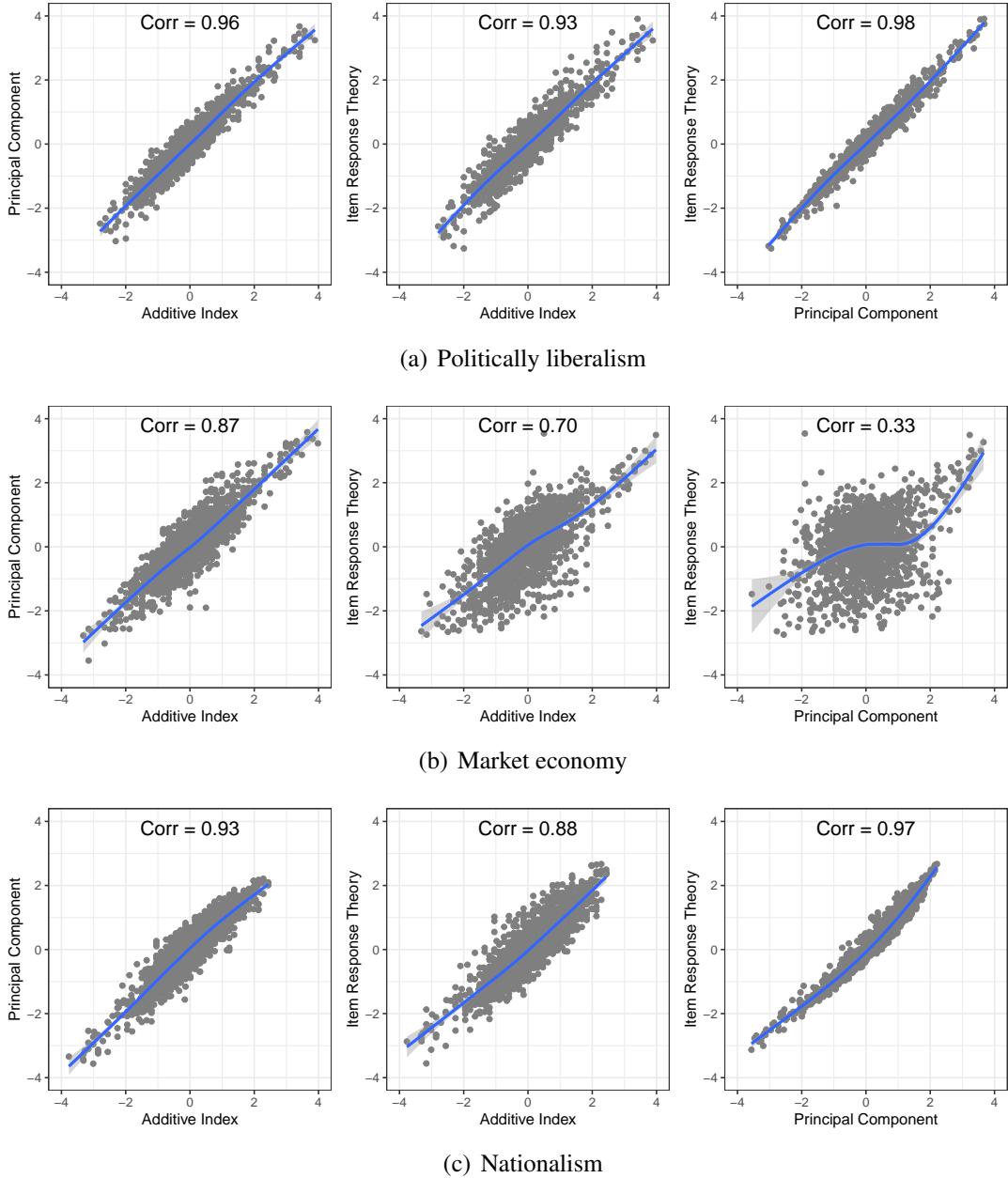


**Note:** The above figures show the distributions of education levels of the respondents in Sample 1 and Sample 2.

## A3 Measurements: PCA vs IRT

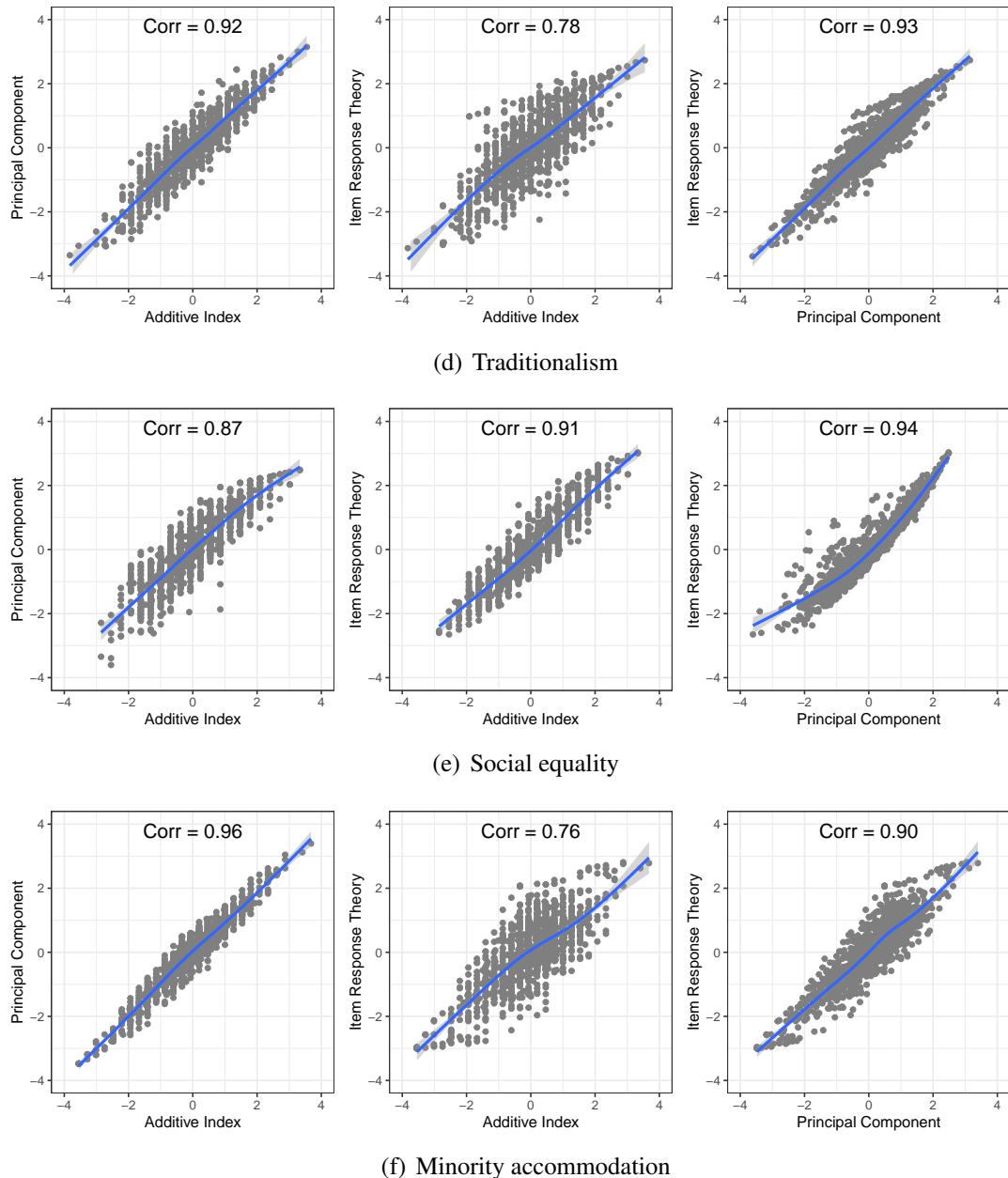
Figures A3 and A4 plot the ideological measures obtained using PCA and IRT from Sample 1 and Sample 2, respectively.

FIGURE A3. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SIMPLE ADDITIVE INDICES AND PCA/IRT MEASURES: SAMPLE 1



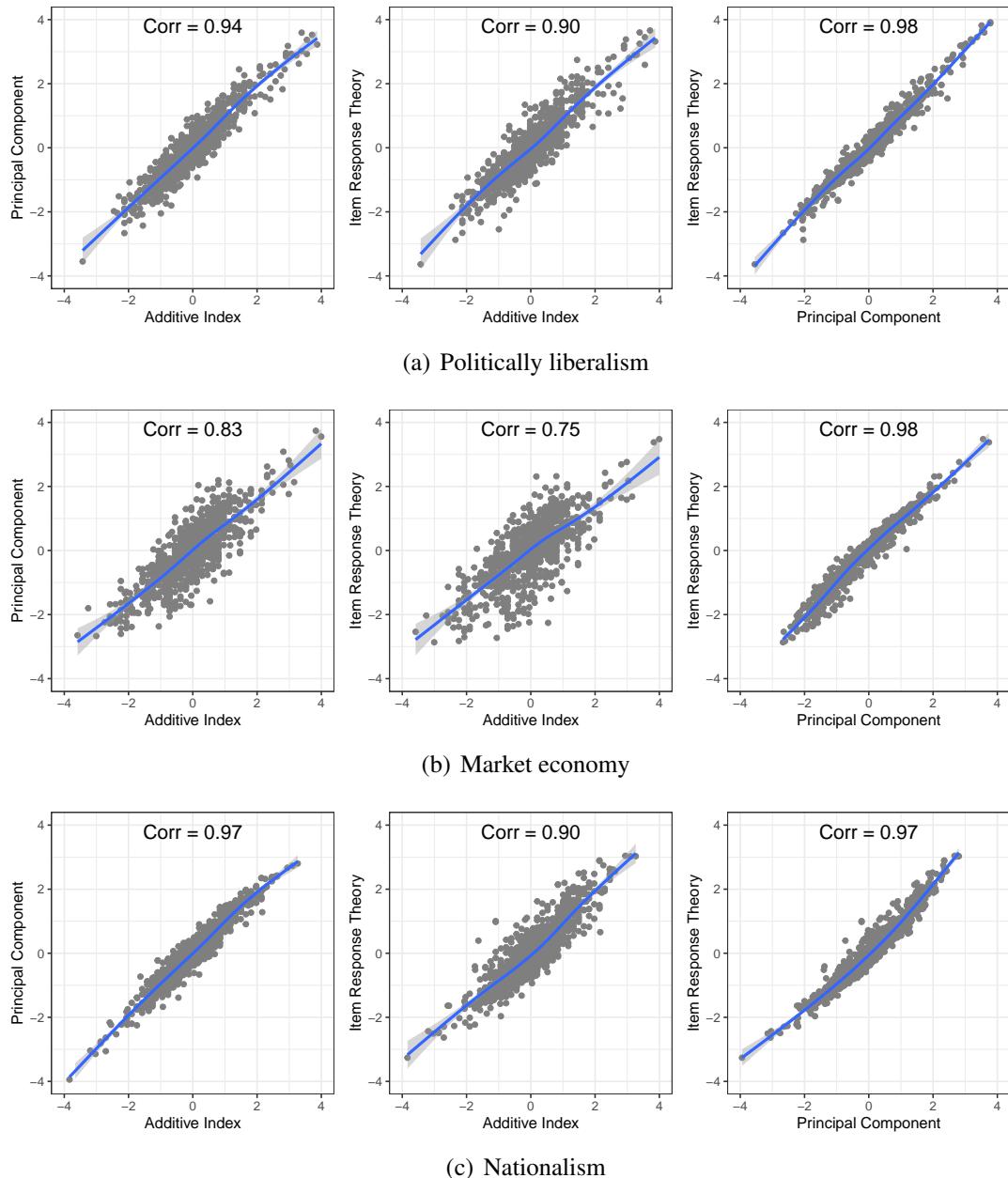
**Note:** The above figures show the scatterplots of measures using a simple additive method, a PCA, and an IRT method. The results are based on Sample 1.

FIGURE A3. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SIMPLE ADDITIVE INDICES AND PCA/IRT MEASURES: SAMPLE 1 (CONT.)



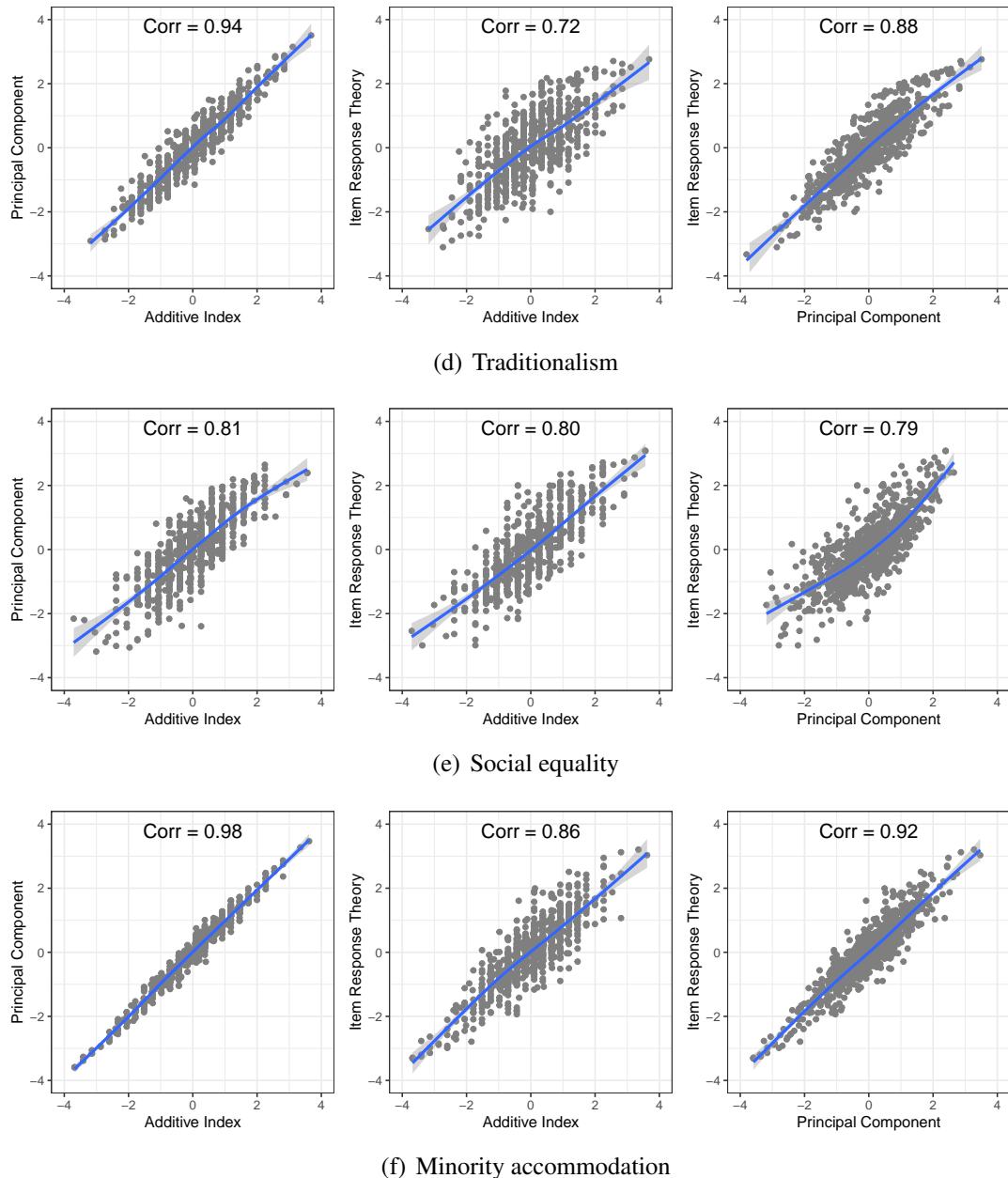
**Note:** The above figures show the scatterplots of measures using a simple additive method, a PCA, and an IRT method. The results are based on Sample 1.

FIGURE A4. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SIMPLE ADDITIVE INDICES AND PCA/IRT MEASURES: SAMPLE 2



**Note:** The above figures show the scatterplots of measures using a simple additive method, a PCA, and an IRT method. The results are based on Sample 2.

FIGURE A4. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN SIMPLE ADDITIVE INDICES AND PCA/IRT MEASURES: SAMPLE 2 (CONT.)



**Note:** The above figures show the scatterplots of measures using a simple additive method, a PCA, and an IRT method. The results are based on Sample 2.

## A4 Multidimensionality

**Failure to self-identify on a left-to-right scale.** In the first wave of *Sample 2*, we ask respondents to place themselves on a left-right scale. Table A4 shows that 17% could not do so, and the majority of those who placed themselves on the scale chose the “Centrist” position (62%). For comparison, in the United States between 1972 and 2000, 20% to 35% of respondents say “Don’t Know” and 20-25% select a centrist position (Treier and Hillygus 2009). Among the remaining, 15% said they were Left or Left-leaning and 6% said they were Right or Right-leaning. Respondents’ self-identification correlates poorly with all of the six policy preference measures, ranging from 2.46% to 8.31%. Self-identification is also highly unstable—the correlation between answers to this question asked one month apart in *Sample 2* is merely 9.25%.

TABLE A4. SELF-IDENTIFICATION ON A LEFT-RIGHT SCALE

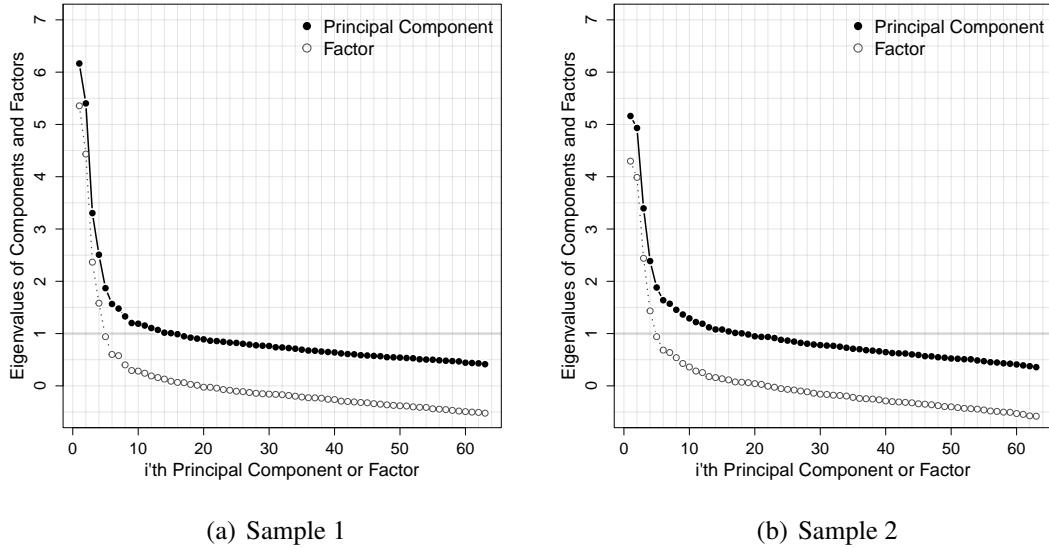
	Extreme Left	Left Left	Left Leaning	Centrist	Right Leaning	Right Right	Extreme Right	Don’t Know	Total
Count	7	19	105	556	46	7	2	149	891
Percentage	0.8	2.1	11.8	62.4	5.2	0.8	0.2	16.7	100

*Note:* The above results are based on Sample 2, first wave.

These result accords with our expectations for multi-dimensionality. In a belief system characterized by multi-dimensionality, it would be difficult for individuals to use partisan heuristics such as Left or Right to articulate their policy preferences.

**Scree plots.** The scree plots in Figure A5 show that the eigenvalues decline gradually after the first few components, without a clear point of inflection, which suggests that respondents' policy preferences are highly multi-dimensional, as no single or small set of latent factors captures most of the variation in their ideological orientations.

FIGURE A5. SCREE PLOT: PRINCIPAL COMPONENT AND FACTOR ANALYSES



**Note:** The above figures show the scree plots based on principal component analysis (PCA) and factor analysis (FA) using all 63 questions. PCA is a data reduction method that aims at maximizing the explained variance in the data by the first few principal components while FA explicitly assumes a latent factor model (which allows the error term to have an arbitrary diagonal covariance matrix) and uses a maximum likelihood method for estimation. Both methods show that policy preferences of the respondents are highly multi-dimensional.

## A5 Other Correlational Analyses

**Preference stability by subgroup.** Table A5 illustrates preference stability by subgroup. Respondents with higher levels of education, political knowledge, English proficiency, income, and work experience demonstrate more stable preferences than their counterparts.

TABLE A5. PREFERENCE STABILITY: BY SUBGROUP.

Stability *100	Political liberalism (14 items)	Market economy (14 items)	Nationalism (14 items)	Traditionalism (7 items)	Social equality (7 items)	Minority accommodatio (7 items)
<b>Full sample</b>	72.1	73.1	77.9	74.5	51.1	70.6
<b>Education</b>						
College or above	75.9	75.7	79.5	75.5	50.0	71.0
Below college	58.9	66.6	75.0	72.6	52.2	69.9
<b>Political knowledge</b>						
High	79.3	78.6	82.4	72.2	45.6	72.8
Low	65.8	69.7	75.0	75.4	53.8	69.3
<b>Monthly income</b>						
Over 8000 RMB	76.0	71.7	77.7	70.6	49.9	68.7
Below 8000 RMB	69.4	74.3	78.7	77.3	53.5	71.7
<b>English proficiency</b>						
Proficient	74.5	75.8	82.8	71.6	53.8	65.9
Not proficient	69.6	71.0	72.6	74.9	48.2	73.8
<b>Work experience</b>						
Working or retired	72.7	73.6	79.9	75.1	50.1	70.5
Have not worked	67.9	70.2	58.6	70.2	54.4	71.0

*Note:* The results are based on Sample 2.

**Ideology predicts regime support.** We examine the relationship between preferences in the six policy domains and regime support. In doing so, we provide further evidence of their multi-dimensionality. Table A6 shows the estimated regression coefficients of policy preference on seven measures of support for China’s current political system and trust in government using data from *Sample 1*. Support for the political system is measured using four survey questions on a 5-point agree-disagree Likert scale (columns (2)-(5) of Table A6): (1) that the respondent believes China’s current system can solve the problems China faces, (2) that the respondent is proud of China’s current system, (3) that the respondent believes people should support China’s current system, (4) that the respondent prefers to live under the China current system as opposed to any other political system. To avoid multiple comparisons, we also include an additive index of these four measures as an outcome in column (1). Trust in government is dis-aggregated into trust in the central government and in the municipal-level government (columns (6) and (7), respectively). All regressions control for a wide range of individual respondent characteristics and provincial fixed effects with Huber-White robust standard errors.

TABLE A6. PREFERENCE MEASURES AND REGIME SUPPORT

Outcome variables	Support for the Current System					Trust in the Government	
	Additive Index (SD = 1)	Current system can solve problems (1)	Be proud of the current system (2)	People should support the current system (3)	Prefer to live under the current system (4)	Central [0, 10] (6)	Municipal [0, 10] (7)
		[1, 5]	[1, 5]	[1, 5]	[1, 5]	[0, 10]	[0, 10]
Politically liberal	-0.311 (0.030)	-0.275 (0.034)	-0.316 (0.031)	-0.219 (0.039)	-0.265 (0.032)	-0.422 (0.065)	-0.539 (0.079)
Pro-market	-0.195 (0.029)	-0.186 (0.032)	-0.204 (0.030)	-0.100 (0.037)	-0.181 (0.030)	-0.277 (0.061)	-0.278 (0.079)
Nationalistic	0.228 (0.028)	0.164 (0.033)	0.207 (0.029)	0.171 (0.036)	0.221 (0.031)	0.539 (0.065)	0.239 (0.079)
Traditionalist	0.028 (0.025)	0.025 (0.029)	-0.022 (0.027)	0.050 (0.033)	0.040 (0.027)	0.095 (0.056)	0.114 (0.070)
Pro-equality	0.004 (0.025)	-0.004 (0.026)	0.034 (0.026)	-0.041 (0.031)	0.031 (0.026)	-0.084 (0.050)	-0.163 (0.063)
Minority accommodating	0.126 (0.025)	0.099 (0.026)	0.117 (0.026)	0.120 (0.032)	0.089 (0.026)	0.285 (0.050)	0.366 (0.064)
Outcome variable mean	-0.000	3.800	3.944	3.582	3.976	8.375	6.791
Observations	1438	1352	1394	1374	1377	1438	1438
R-squared	0.408	0.302	0.372	0.211	0.336	0.316	0.231

**Note:** The results are based on Sample 1. Provincial fixed effects and individuals characteristics, including gender, age (level and squared), education, ethnicity, urban *Hukou*, Communist party membership, self-reported income, perceived social class, religiosity, and political knowledge, are controlled for in all regressions. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Across all measures of regime support, nationalism is predictive of more positive assessments of China’s current political system and higher levels of trust in central and local

governments. In contrast, preferences for more political liberalism is associated with more negative assessment of China's current political system and lower levels of trust in central and local governments. Favoring market economy—having preferences for market allocation of resources and private ownership—is associated with more negative assessments of the current political system and lower levels of government trust. These results are consistent with our expectation, and give us more confidence about the construct validity of the preference dimensions.

Interestingly, having preferences for ethnic accommodation is also associated with higher levels of support for the current political system and higher levels of trust in government though we conjecture that the causal relationship may be that those with higher level of regime support are more likely to favor ethnic accommodation. This relationship may be influenced by the propaganda strategies of the regime. For example, it is easy to find criticisms on Chinese social media of policies of ethnic accommodation—e.g., advantaging ethnic minorities in China's college entrance exams and devoting government funds to maintain religious sites—but these policies are strongly endorsed by the regime because the CCP's official position on ethnic policy, according to its propaganda messages, is one of ethnic unity (民族团结) much like USSR's Korenizatsiya policy for ethnic integration. Thus, it may be the case that those who strongly support the Chinese regime also adopt the regime's official position of ethnic unity and hence prefer ethnic accommodation. Finally, there are no consistent and statistically significant relationships between traditionalism and regime support and between equality and regime support. The only exception is that stronger preferences for social equality are associated with more negative assessments municipal governments.

The fact that preferences across several policy dimensions are statistically significant correlates of support and trust in the government provides further evidence of multi-dimensionality. If preferences in these issue area could be reduced to a single dimension, then we would not observe that preference measures in several issue areas are correlated with regime support in a statistically significant manner.

**Determinants of Ideology.** In Table A7, we show the associations between individual characteristics and preferences. In our sample, women appear to be less politically liberal, but also less nationalistic. College education is associated with political liberalism and pro-market preferences. A higher level of political knowledge is positively associated with political liberalism, pro-market preferences, and preferences for accommodating ethnic minorities. Urban hukou is positively correlated with political liberalism and pro-market preferences and negatively correlated with nationalism. Communist Party membership is negatively correlated with political liberalism but does not explain pro-market preferences; it is positively associated with nationalism. Those who perceive themselves as belonging to a high social class are negatively correlated with political liberalism and are less likely to support pro-equality policies. English proficiency is negatively correlated with nationalism and traditionalism, but positively correlated with accommodating ethnic minorities.

TABLE A7. DETERMINANTS OF PREFERENCES AND PREFERENCE INTENSITY  
(POOLED SAMPLE)

Outcome variables	Politically liberalal	Pro-market	Nationalistic	Traditionalistic	Pro-equality	Minority accommodating
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Female	-0.164 (0.043)	-0.007 (0.044)	-0.177 (0.043)	-0.225 (0.043)	-0.191 (0.043)	0.075 (0.044)
Age/10	0.032 (0.028)	0.023 (0.028)	0.089 (0.029)	0.135 (0.027)	0.100 (0.029)	0.031 (0.026)
College or above	0.130 (0.049)	0.131 (0.051)	-0.025 (0.048)	-0.046 (0.051)	0.021 (0.052)	-0.092 (0.053)
Political knowledge	0.042 (0.013)	0.038 (0.013)	0.010 (0.013)	0.025 (0.012)	0.021 (0.013)	0.044 (0.012)
Urban Hukou	0.199 (0.050)	0.194 (0.053)	-0.157 (0.049)	-0.032 (0.051)	-0.055 (0.052)	-0.028 (0.053)
CCP member	-0.258 (0.056)	-0.057 (0.057)	0.089 (0.055)	0.073 (0.054)	-0.128 (0.059)	0.020 (0.054)
Married	0.016 (0.057)	0.024 (0.058)	0.118 (0.056)	0.066 (0.057)	0.134 (0.059)	-0.167 (0.059)
Having worked	0.016 (0.061)	-0.180 (0.065)	0.122 (0.062)	0.175 (0.062)	0.099 (0.065)	-0.084 (0.066)
Income bracket	0.042 (0.016)	0.041 (0.017)	-0.011 (0.017)	-0.048 (0.016)	-0.006 (0.017)	-0.002 (0.017)
Perceived social class	-0.143 (0.036)	-0.055 (0.038)	0.016 (0.037)	0.037 (0.035)	-0.121 (0.036)	0.012 (0.035)
English proficiency	0.039 (0.024)	0.039 (0.026)	-0.096 (0.024)	-0.122 (0.025)	0.025 (0.022)	0.081 (0.024)
Sample	Pooled	Pooled	Pooled	Pooled	Pooled	Pooled
Outcome variable mean	0.004	-0.001	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.003
Observations	2,254	2,254	2,254	2,254	2,254	2,254
R-squared	0.075	0.056	0.081	0.127	0.065	0.053

*Note:* Provincial fixed effects are controlled for in all regressions. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

## A6 Example Measurement Strategies

TABLE A8. EXAMPLE QUESTION SETS: 5 FOR EACH POLICY DOMAIN

Political Liberalism (Politically Liberal)		
No.	Question	Sign
1	From a long-term perspective, western multi-party systems are not suitable for China's situation. 长远来看，多党竞争的政治制度不适合中国国情。	-1
4	When accidents that have major repercussions for public safety occur, the government should freely disseminate information even if information disclosure may increase of the risks of widespread panic. 发生重大社会安全事故时，政府应尽可能公开信息，即使信息公开有可能造成大众恐慌。	1
9	There should be limitation on people gathering in public places and participating in demonstrations. 应当限制人们在公共场所聚集和参与游行示威。	-1
10	Religious people should be allowed to preach publicly in non-religious sites. 应该容许宗教人士在非宗教场所公开传教。	1
12	Primary school, secondary school, and college students should all participate in government organized military training. 无论中小学生或大学生，都应参加由国家统一安排的军训。	-1
Stability		0.638
Predictability		0.631

Market Economy (Pro-Market)		
No.	Question	Sign
1	Sectors related to national security and important to the national economy and people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises. 那些关系到国家安全和国计民生的重要领域，必须全部由国有企业掌控。	-1
5	Private capital should be encouraged to set up private hospitals to provide convenient and high-quality services to those who are willing to pay higher prices. 应当鼓励民间资本设立私立医院，为愿意支付高价的人提供便捷和高质量的服务。	1
9	The government should allow people to freely exchange foreign currency. 应当允许人们自由兑换外国货币。	1
11	The national defense industry should be open to private capital. 国防军工行业应该向民营资本开放。	1
12	A high tariff should be imposed on imported goods that are also produced domestically to protect domestic industries. 应当对国外同类产品征收高额关税来保护国内企业。	-1
Stability		0.687
Predictability		0.658

Nationalism (Nationalistic)		
No.	Question	Sign
2	Reunifying Taiwan using military might can be considered when military capabilities are fully developed. 在军事条件成熟的情况下，可以考虑武力统一台湾。	1
4	It is acceptable to criticize or ridicule the country's founding leaders or national heroes in literary and artistic works. 开国领袖、民族英雄可以作为文艺作品批评或调侃的对象。	-1
5	A national holiday should be established to commemorate the birthday of Chairman Mao. 应该设立法定假日纪念毛主席诞辰。	1
10	China should accept supervision and criticism from international organizations and improve its standing in areas such as human rights, democracy and freedom of the press. 中国应当接受国际组织的监督和批评，改善在人权、民主、新闻自由等领域的现状。	-1
12	The government should attach as much importance to the development of military power as it does to economic development. 政府应像重视发展经济那样，重视发展军事实力。	1
Stability		0.700
Predictability		0.685

Traditionalism (Traditionalist)		
No.	Question	Sign
2	State healthcare resources should be oriented more toward Traditional Chinese Medicine than toward western medicine. 国家医疗资源应该更多向中医、而非西医倾斜。	1
3	During the stage of compulsory education, class hours spent on English should be reduced, and class hours dedicated to traditional culture should be increased. 应在义务教育阶段减少英语课时，增加关于传统文化的内容。	1
5	Same-sex marriage should be legalized in China. 应该立法承认同性婚姻。	1
6	Adult films and television production should be legalized. 成人影视作品应该合法化。	-1
7	China should support and develop GMO technology in agriculture. 政府应该支持和发展农业转基因技术。	-1
Stability		0.700
Predictability		0.670

Social Equality (Pro-Equality)		
No.	Question	Sign
2	The government should set quotas to guarantee that a significant proportion of jobs at all levels of government are held by women. 政府应设定额度，保障女性在各级政府工作人员中有较高的比例。	1
3	It is justified that public servants enjoy better social welfare benefits than employees of private firms and institutions. 公务员比企事业单位人员享受更好的福利待遇，是合理的。	-1
4	Children of urban migrant workers attending primary and secondary schools should enjoy the same treatment as school-age children of local residents. 进城务工人员子女在务工地就读中小学，应享受与本地适龄儿童相同的待遇。	1
6	The primary means to improve the lives of people with low income is for the government to give them fiscal subsidies. 改善低收入者生活的首要手段是政府给予财政补贴。	1
7	The government should reduce the tax burden of high-income people. 政府应该降低高收入人群的税收负担。	-1
Stability		0.472
Predictability		0.441

Minority Accommodation (Minority Accommodating)		
No.	Question	Sign
3	Ethnic minorities should be appointed to the top political positions of minority autonomous regions, including the position of regional party secretary. 民族自治区应当由少数民族担任“一把手”，包括自治区党委书记。	1
4	The policy of giving additional points to ethnic minority students in the college entrance examination should be stopped. 应该停止对少数民族考生的高考加分政策。	-1
5	In ethnic minority areas, women should be prohibited from wearing clothing that obscures their faces in public places, and men prohibited from having long beards. 在少数民族地区，应立法禁止女性在公共场所佩戴蒙面罩袍，禁止男性留长须。	-1
6	In ethnic minority areas, the government should regularly appropriate funding to maintain religious sites, including mosques and Buddhist temples. 在少数民族地区，政府应拨款定期修缮清真寺、藏传佛教寺庙等宗教场所。	1
7	Primary and secondary schools in ethnic minority areas should use Chinese as the main teaching language and vigorously promote Mandarin. 在少数民族地区的中小学，应使用以汉语为主的教学方式，并大力推广普通话。	-1
Stability		0.641
Predictability		0.653

*Note:* Stability and predictability measures are based on Sample 2.

## References

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